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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/965,370	09/26/2001	Hua Chung	APPM/6303/CPI/COPPER/PJS	6507

7590

04/28/2006

Patent Counsel
Applied Materials, Inc.
P.O. Box 450-A
Santa Clara, CA 95052

EXAMINER

FULLER, ERIC B

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1762

DATE MAILED: 04/28/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Advisory Action Before the Filing of an Appeal Brief	Application No. 09/965,370	Applicant(s) CHUNG ET AL.	
	Examiner Eric B. Fuller	Art Unit 1762	

--The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

THE REPLY FILED 28 March 2006 FAILS TO PLACE THIS APPLICATION IN CONDITION FOR ALLOWANCE.

1. ☒ The reply was filed after a final rejection, but prior to or on the same day as filing a Notice of Appeal. To avoid abandonment of this application, applicant must timely file one of the following replies: (1) an amendment, affidavit, or other evidence, which places the application in condition for allowance; (2) a Notice of Appeal (with appeal fee) in compliance with 37 CFR 41.31; or (3) a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) in compliance with 37 CFR 1.114. The reply must be filed within one of the following time periods:

- a) ☒ The period for reply expires 3 months from the mailing date of the final rejection.
 b) ☐ The period for reply expires on: (1) the mailing date of this Advisory Action, or (2) the date set forth in the final rejection, whichever is later. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of the final rejection.

Examiner Note: If box 1 is checked, check either box (a) or (b). ONLY CHECK BOX (b) WHEN THE FIRST REPLY WAS FILED WITHIN TWO MONTHS OF THE FINAL REJECTION. See MPEP 706.07(f).

Extensions of time may be obtained under 37 CFR 1.136(a). The date on which the petition under 37 CFR 1.136(a) and the appropriate extension fee have been filed is the date for purposes of determining the period of extension and the corresponding amount of the fee. The appropriate extension fee under 37 CFR 1.17(a) is calculated from: (1) the expiration date of the shortened statutory period for reply originally set in the final Office action; or (2) as set forth in (b) above, if checked. Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of the final rejection, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

NOTICE OF APPEAL

2. ☐ The Notice of Appeal was filed on _____. A brief in compliance with 37 CFR 41.37 must be filed within two months of the date of filing the Notice of Appeal (37 CFR 41.37(a)), or any extension thereof (37 CFR 41.37(e)), to avoid dismissal of the appeal. Since a Notice of Appeal has been filed, any reply must be filed within the time period set forth in 37 CFR 41.37(a).

AMENDMENTS

3. ☐ The proposed amendment(s) filed after a final rejection, but prior to the date of filing a brief, will not be entered because
 (a) ☐ They raise new issues that would require further consideration and/or search (see NOTE below);
 (b) ☐ They raise the issue of new matter (see NOTE below);
 (c) ☐ They are not deemed to place the application in better form for appeal by materially reducing or simplifying the issues for appeal; and/or
 (d) ☐ They present additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims.

NOTE: _____. (See 37 CFR 1.116 and 41.33(a)).

4. ☐ The amendments are not in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121. See attached Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment (PTOL-324).
 5. ☐ Applicant's reply has overcome the following rejection(s): _____.
 6. ☐ Newly proposed or amended claim(s) _____ would be allowable if submitted in a separate, timely filed amendment canceling the non-allowable claim(s).
 7. ☒ For purposes of appeal, the proposed amendment(s): a) ☐ will not be entered, or b) ☒ will be entered and an explanation of how the new or amended claims would be rejected is provided below or appended.
 The status of the claim(s) is (or will be) as follows:
 Claim(s) allowed: _____.
 Claim(s) objected to: _____.
 Claim(s) rejected: 1-7,9,10,39,42 and 44-69.
 Claim(s) withdrawn from consideration: _____.

AFFIDAVIT OR OTHER EVIDENCE

8. ☐ The affidavit or other evidence filed after a final action, but before or on the date of filing a Notice of Appeal will not be entered because applicant failed to provide a showing of good and sufficient reasons why the affidavit or other evidence is necessary and was not earlier presented. See 37 CFR 1.116(e).
 9. ☐ The affidavit or other evidence filed after the date of filing a Notice of Appeal, but prior to the date of filing a brief, will not be entered because the affidavit or other evidence failed to overcome all rejections under appeal and/or appellant fails to provide a showing of good and sufficient reasons why it is necessary and was not earlier presented. See 37 CFR 41.33(d)(1).
 10. ☐ The affidavit or other evidence is entered. An explanation of the status of the claims after entry is below or attached.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION/OTHER

11. ☒ The request for reconsideration has been considered but does NOT place the application in condition for allowance because: see attached Detailed Action.
 12. ☐ Note the attached Information Disclosure Statement(s). (PTO/SB/08 or PTO-1449) Paper No(s). _____.
 13. ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

The proposed amendments have been entered, as they only act to cancel some claims and to make some claims that are dependent on these now cancelled claims independent. Therefore, the scopes of the claims have not been change.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments are vague and confusing. It is not understood exactly what points the applicant is trying to argue.

First, the applicant argues what each individual reference fails to teach. In response to applicant's arguments against the references individually, one cannot show nonobviousness by attacking references individually where the rejections are based on combinations of references. See *In re Keller*, 642 F.2d 413, 208 USPQ 871 (CCPA 1981); *In re Merck & Co.*, 800 F.2d 1091, 231 USPQ 375 (Fed. Cir. 1986). It is noted that the examiner admits that Lopatin '954 teaches all the claimed features except for the use of other metals. The examiner relies on Lopatin '799 for teaching the obviousness of using other metals. What other features Lopatin '799 does not teach, but is taught by Lopatin '954, is inconsequential to the obviousness rejection based on the combination of references as presented by the examiner in the Final Office Action.

Secondly, the applicant argues that the combination of reference fails to teach... then the applicant basically repeats the claims in their entirety. The reference

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at least teach some aspects of the invention (it is the position of the examiner that the combination teaches all of the claimed features) and without some specificity in the applicant's arguments, it is difficult to give any weight to this argument. This argument fails to comply with 37 CFR 1.111(b) because it amounts to a general allegation that the claims define a patentable invention without specifically pointing out how the language of the claims patentably distinguishes them from the references. The applicant has merely argued that the limitations of claim 1 are not taught, but has not argued which limitation is not taught and which limitation is believed to make the application patentable. The examiner has explicitly shown where (by citing column and lines) each limitation is taught by the prior art references and has provided proper motivation to use the other metals from the secondary reference in the process of the primary reference. The applicant has not argued the motivation nor shown how the cited column and lines of the references do not teach the aspects that the examiner believes are taught. As shown by the examiner, the primary reference teaches that the barrier layer is deposited by ALD in column 5, lines 19-25. The copper seed layer is also taught. The secondary reference teaches the benefit of alloying aluminum or magnesium into the seed layer. The best interpretation of the arguments that the examiner can determine is that the applicant is arguing that Lopatin fails to teach the barrier layer is less than about 50 angstroms thick (or less than about 20 angstroms thick for some other claims). Lopatin '954 teaches this aspect in column 5, lines 29-31. Therefore, the claimed method is made obvious by the prior art cited in the previous Office Action and the rejections therein are maintained.

Conclusion


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Eric B. Fuller whose telephone number is (571) 272-1420. The examiner can normally be reached on Mondays through Thursdays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tim Meeks, can be reached on (571) 272-1423. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



EBF



TIMOTHY MEEKS
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER